

JACKIE KARMA

CHAPTER TWO

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PAGE ONE

Panel 1. We're inside a large, dark room. A bald man in his fifties (HOLMES) sits cross-legged on a mat, two candles burning, one on each side of him. In front of the man, hanging on a wall and slightly illuminated by the candles is a large tapestry, bearing roughly the same design we saw on the back of Jackie's jacket. The man is white, and has a fu Manchu looking mustache. Feel free to do whatever you want with the room. This is the secret HQ of the Sabaki Boys.

Panel 2. From somewhere behind the sitting man, a door opens, and a younger man (CARLTON) stands in the doorway, cautiously leaning in to address the older man. Light floods in from behind the man in the doorway. Carlton is black.

CARLTON:           Master Holmes?

Panel 3. The man turns his head slightly, reacting to the man in the door.

HOLMES:           What is it, Carlton?

Panel 4. The man has stepped into the room, and is bowing slightly.

CARLTON:           I have some rather disturbing news, sir. A report from the city.

PAGE TWO

Panel 1. Holmes is turned around, waiting for Carlton to tell him what he wants.

HOLMES:           Go on.

Panel 2. Carlton, head slightly bowed, speaks.

CARLTON:           The ghosts of the past walk the streets of New York.

Panel 3. Holmes gazes with dull eyes at Carlton.

Panel 4. Same shot, but Holmes is speaking.

HOLMES:           Help me out here, Carlton. Which ghosts are we talking about?

Panel 5. Carlton still has his head down, but is looking up at Holmes now.

CARLTON:           The chosen son has returned. The lion stalks again.

Panel 6. Holmes's eyes grow big.

HOLMES:           Karma.

PAGE THREE

Panel 1. Profile of MARCUS KING, poring over a thick book of some sort. He's wearing glasses and a tight sweater.

MARCUS: Ordinance 320—ordinance—damn it. This makes no sense.

Panel 2. Marcus is turning slightly, sneering a bit, in response to a voice from behind him.

VOICE: Looks like you could use a lawyer to help with that stuff.

MARCUS: Sounds like you could use a foot up your—

Panel 3. Marcus turns and sees it's Jackie. Jackie's smiling.

MARCUS: Ho-lee shit.

JACKIE: What's happening, partner?

Panel 4. Marcus looks over his glasses at Jackie.

MARCUS: You playing dress-up, counselor? Because I ain't seen that jacket in a long damn time. Can't say I missed it much, either.

Panel 5. Jackie, pointing over his shoulder with a thumb.

JACKIE: Why don't we go grab a cup of coffee. I'll tell you about it.

PAGE FOUR

Panel 1. The two men are exiting the library, onto a city street.

MARCUS: I need a break, anyway. There's a lot of interesting shit that goes with being a "community activist," but I spend way too much time trying to make sense out of legal jive that was written by guys trying not to make sense.

JACKIE: Heh. I hear that.

Panel 2. The two walk down the street. As they walk they attract a few startled looks, or people trying not to look.

MARCUS: But you know what I do, man. Why don't you fill me on why you tracked me down after all this time.

Panel 3. Jackie, looking around as he talks.

JACKIE: Yeah, I will. I debated even trying to drag you into this, but when we hung up the gloves, we never said it would be forever.

Panel 4. Marcus shrugs a bit as he walks, maybe holding his hands out as he explains stuff.

MARCUS: No, I s'pose not. But I think it was kind of understood, right? I mean—it's been almost ten years, man. I mean—it's a different game out there now. Brothers are hooked on shit we couldn't even dream of back in the day, and the economy—it makes people crazy.

Panel 5. Marcus looks over at Jackie as they walk.

JACKIE: I know, I know. I'm not that out of touch. But you know I wouldn't show up if I didn't think it was something heavy.

MARCUS: That's what worries me, baby.

Panel 6. Marcus pointing to Jackie's coat.

MARCUS:           Well, that jacket worries me, too. I'm guessing I'm  
not talking to John Carmichael, attorney at law.

PAGE FIVE

Panel 1. Shot of Jackie.

JACKIE: People remember us, Marcus. They do. Like it or not, Jackie Karma and Marcus King are legends in this city.

And, you know—sometimes it takes a legend to put down another legend.

Panel 2. Marcus, a little worried about what he'll hear.

MARCUS: Now he's a poet. All right, John...Jackie. Lay it on me. Who are we talking about here?

Panel 3. Jackie, not looking at Marcus. Marcus is looking at Jackie.

JACKIE: Kid brought a note to my office a couple of days ago. A note from Bobby.

MARCUS: Bobby--?

Panel 4. Marcus is surprised to hear Bobby's even alive.

MARCUS: Bobby *Howler*? Jesus, man. What kinda shape is *he* in?

Panel 5. Jackie is giving Marcus an appraising look as he drops this on him.

JACKIE: Dunno. It was just a note. But the note said Gil Gunn is back on the streets.

Panel 6. Marcus stops, and looks over his glasses at Jackie, one hand on the edge of the frames.

MARCUS: Gil Gunn? I broke that motherfucker's back once, Jackie. Say the word and I'll do it again.



PAGE SIX

Panel 1. Horizontal panel. This is the mob meeting mentioned in chapter one. Sitting around a big wooden table in a paneled meeting room, are ROCCO (from chapter one), GINO VALENTINO, TONY PIANO (a crew leader), FRANKIE GRAFANINO (another one) and the big boss, NICKY "NO NO" NOTO. I think Nicky should probably be a really, really fat guy with dead eyes. Fat rings on his fat fingers. He's got a plate of something in front of him, and gestures with a fork in hand when he talks. Probably a glass of wine handy, too. He's a gross one, is Nicky.

NICKY:        So, Gino—you was the last guy to see Tony before he went AWOL.

Panel 2.

GINO:                That's true, Nicky.

Panel 3. Nicky, head down, looking at his plate, points at Tony with his fork.

NICKY:        I know it's true, kid. That's why I said it. No reason to dwell on where he went, but I'm turning over his business to Tony.

TONY:        I got a handle on it, boss.

Panel 4. Now he's pointing to Frankie with his fork.

NICKY:        See that you do, Anthony. Now, on to this other matter. Frankie here's been getting word that someone's dealing some seriously fucked up horse all over my city.

Panel 5. Rocco, curious.

ROCCO:        Horse is bad news, period, but what makes this stuff so especially fucked up?

Panel 6. Frankie.



FRANKIE: It ain't just horse. Someone's made a whole mess of new pills available to every two-bit hustler downtown. This stuff ain't killing nobody yet, but the users end up totally whacked out of their skulls for days. Some of 'em have starved to death just because they got no interest in food no more.

NICKY: If you can imagine such a thing.

PAGE SEVEN

Panel 1. Nicky uses his fork to count off on the fat fingers of his other hand.

NICKY: It's costing us more than you'd think. We're losing numbers players, we're losing hired hands, and, worst of all, these junkies don't care what happens to them. So we're losing our edge on the street trash.

Panel 2. Nicky leans forward, pointing at the men with a fork full of food.

NICKY: You boys keep your eyes and ears open, and you come straight to me if you hear anything about who's dealing all this junk. They're dealing it cheap, and I got no clue why. And I don't like not knowing what's happening in my own backyard, *capice*?

Panel 3. Shot of Gino, nodding.

GINO (and all): *Capice.*

Panel 4. Now Gino's walking down a sidewalk alone. (afternoon) He has his head down, lost in thought.

Panel 5. His head turns as a voice comes from an alleyway.

VOICE: Pssst. Gino.

GINO: Eh?

PAGE EIGHT

Panel 1. From Gino's view point we see GIL, standing in the alleyway, pointing a shiny Saturday Night Special at Gino.

GIL: Step into my office, my Italian-American friend.

GINO: Aw, shit. No way.

Panel 2. Gino has his hands up a bit, not wanting any trouble.

GINO: Jesus—Gil Gunn? I thought you was dead. Karma and King—

GIL: Two names I don't want to hear, Gino. Get me?

Panel 3. Gino, nervous.

GINO: Okay, okay. I get you. But what do you want from me?

Panel 4. Gil, smiling, a hand on his own chest to make his point.

GIL: I need someone the local trash respects to peddle something for me, Gino. And it should not surprise you that I'm now above doing that kind of thing myself.

Panel 5. Gino is really not digging this scene.

GINO: Ah, Christ. You're the one pushing those loaded pills?

Panel 6. Close up of Gil, all business.

GIL: For a good Catholic boy, you sure take the lord's name in vain an awful lot, Gino. And let me correct you. From now on, *we're* pushing those loaded pills, dig?

PAGE NINE

Panel 1. Jackie and Marcus sit at a table in a Chinese coffee shop. Keep in mind it's still 1976. I'm thinking it looks more like a small diner than the fancy Starbucks stuff we're used to today, and with Chinese shit. Maybe they're sitting at a booth. Sipping coffee.

MARCUS: Where the hell do you find a Chinese coffee shop?

JACKIE: You can find anything in New York, Marcus. I remember when you found

Panel 2.

MARCUS: Speaking of women—how's yours doing?

JACKIE: Lindsey? Ah, she's fine. Puts up with me, anyway.

Panel 3. Marcus is finishing his cup of coffee.

MARCUS: She know you put the jacket back on?

JACKIE: Eh. I told her I had to deal with some issues from the past, you know? Truth is, she doesn't really know much about the old days.

Panel 4. The two men are getting up. Jackie's putting some money on the table.

MARCUS: Right on. So, speaking of the old days—any idea what Gunn's up to? Bobby say why he visited him?

Panel 5. The two are walking out the door of the coffee shop. Our view is from inside.

JACKIE: No, but it spooked him. He told Bobby that we all needed to stay out of his way. "Stay retired" was the phrase he used. So there's no doubt something's up.

Panel 6. We see a girl picking up the money off the table, glowering as she looks out the window as Jackie and Marcus pass. This is Holly Gold.

PAGE TEN (okay, I know it's probably obvious what's going on here, but I thought it would be fun if we implied Sam Jones was a man until we see her in "person" next issue)

Panel 1. Phone is ringing on a table. In the foreground, we can see a man's legs entangled with a woman's.

FX:           BRRRRRING

VOICE:      Goddammit.

Panel 2. Same shot, but the legs have moved.

VOICE:      Baby, I'm gonna have to get this. Never know when business is calling.

VOICE:      Mmm-kay, doll.

Panel 3. We see Gino, sweaty and stressed, in a phone booth (remember those), on the phone.

GINO:           Sam? Is this Sam Jones?

VOICE:      Ah, hell. Is this Gino Valentino? You got any idea what I was just—

Panel 4. Gino, wide-eyed.

GINO:           Sam, just listen, all right? I need help. I'm in a tight spot, and I think I may need protection.

Panel 5. We see the phone on the table, cord stretched out of the frame. Sam's obviously talking.

VOICE:      Protection's expensive, Gino. You know that, right? Plus, you fucked up my mojo tonight, so that might cost you extra.

Panel 6. Gino, eyes closed, hand on forehead.

GINO: I can lose the money, Sam. My life I'd like to keep a little longer.

PAGE ELEVEN

Panel 1. Jackie and Marcus are walking down the street.

JACKIE:     Anyway, I just needed to know if you're in, Marcus. We spent too long trying to keep bastards like Gil Gunn off the streets not to do anything when he shows up again.

Panel 2. We're looking down on Jackie and Marcus now, over the shoulder of someone perched on a fire escape or a roof...some higher vantage point.

MARCUS:    I'm in, Jack. I still owe that mother for a few things, and to tell the truth, I could use an excuse to blow off some steam.

Panel 3. Someone is standing behind the two men now.

JACKIE:     All right. That's what I—

JACKIE:     Uh—

Panel 4. Now the silhouette of a man is in the foreground, facing Jackie and Marcus. It's kind of a narrow shot, so we can't see much beyond that, and we can see someone's behind them, as well.

MARCUS:    Christ almighty.



PAGE TWELVE

Full splash. Jackie and Marcus are in slightly defensive poses (Jackie has his hands slightly raised, as if ready to defend himself, Marcus has his fists clenched. The Sabakis look ready to kick some ass.

The boys are surrounded by the Sabaki Boys, led by Master Holmes. There are five of them, all dressed in the same “uniform.” Holmes is pointing a finger, arm outstretched.

HOLMES: Jackie Karma, Marcus King—prepare to meet—THE SABAKI BOYS!

JACKIE: Still in, amigo?

MARCUS: *Hell*, yes.